

Appl. No. 09/816,012  
Amendment and/or Response  
Reply to Office action f 17 October 2003

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REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 31-50 are pending in the application.

The Examiner has rejected claims 31-50 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over O'Donnell ("How Frequent Flier Programs Work") and Stutz ("Your Vacation Plans for Sale?"). The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In claims 31 and 42, upon which each of the other claims depends, the Applicants specifically recite a method that includes *granting access* to a transportation system via the use of a *transportation pass*.

The Examiner asserts that a frequent flier card corresponds to the claimed transportation pass. The Applicants respectfully traverse this assertion. A frequent flier card does not provide *access* to a transportation system. In the particular case of an airline, only a ticket and/or boarding pass provides access to the aircraft. A frequent flier may redeem earned miles to obtain a ticket and/or boarding pass, but the frequent flier card itself has no bearing upon whether the flier is granted access to the transportation system.

Access to the transportation system is completely independent of a frequent flier card:

if a passenger is in possession of a valid boarding pass, the passenger will be granted access to the transportation system, regardless of whether the passenger is in possession of a frequent flier card; and, conversely,

if a passenger is in possession of a frequent flier card but is not in possession of a valid boarding pass, the passenger will not be granted access to the transportation system.

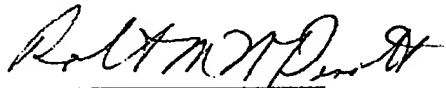
Because possession of a frequent flier card has no bearing on whether access to a transportation system is granted, the Applicants respectfully maintain that a frequent flier card cannot be said to correspond to the Applicants' claimed transportation pass that provides access to a transportation system, and respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration of the rejection of claims 31-50 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over O'Donnell and Stutz.

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In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of record, allow all the pending claims, and find the application to be in condition for allowance. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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